

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

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R 250821Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY WARSAW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3985

INFO AMCONSUL KRAKOW

AMCONSUL POZNAN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PL

SUBJECT: FOOD SITUATION IN SOUTHERN POLAND

REF: A. WARSAW 1418, B. WARSAW 1526

THE FOLLOWING REPORT HAS BEEN RECEIVED FROM THE KRAKOW CONSULATE:

1. FOLLOWING CONVERSATIONS THIS WEEK WITH THE KATOWICE AND KRAKOW PZPR FIRST SECRETARIES AND OBSERVATIONS BY CONSULATE OFFICERS IN BOTH VOIVODSHIPS, IT IS POSSIBLE TO SAY THAT, ALTHOUGH SOME SHORTAGES WILL CONTINUE AND BE THE CAUSE OF SOME GRUMBLING, A GREAT EFFORT IS BEING MADE TO STOCK LOCAL STORES FOR EASTER AND MOST IMMEDIATE NEEDS SHOULD BE MET. IN ORDER TO DO SO, HOWEVER, IT HAS BEEN NECESSARY TO IMPORT BUTTER AND, APPARENTLY, TO WITHOLD CERTAIN MEAT PRODUCTS FROM THE LUCRATIVE EXPORT MARKET. EVEN WITH SUCH SHORT TERM MEASURES, APPARENTLY DESIGNED TO GET THE REGIME OVER THE HOLIDAY HUMP, IMPORTANT SHORTAGES OF MILK, VEAL AND BEEF MAY CONTINUE FOR MONTHS. THIS IS PARTICULARLY TRUE IN KRAKOW, WHERE PARTY FIRST SEVRETARY JOZEF KLASA PAINTED A BLEAK PICTURE IN A

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MARCH 17 CONVERSATION WITH CONSULATE OFFICERS. HE PREDICTED

THAT IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE TO OVERCOME THE PRESENT SITUATION "WITHOUT DIFFICULTIES". IN A MARCH 19 CONVERSATION, KLASA'S COUNTERPART IN KATOWICE, ZDISLAW GRUDZIEN, PRESENTED A SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT VIEW TO THE PRINCIPAL OFFICER, POINTING OUT THAT "WHILE THERE MAY BE SHORTAGES IN OUT OF THE WAY PLACES LIKE KRAKOW, YOU CAN BE SURE THAT THERE WILL BE ADEQUATE FOOD SUPPLIES IN WORKERS CENTERS". WHILE ADMITTING THAT RISING CONSUMPTION HAD STRAINED FOOD RESOURCES, HE TERMED THE PRESENT SITUATION "NOT DANGEROUS", REMARKING POINTEDLY THAT "GIEREK'S POPULARITY IS HIGHER THAN EVER AND HIS POLITICAL AUTHORITY SECURE."

2. THE RELATIVE CONFIDENCE OF GRUDZIEN WAS IN MARKED CONTRAST TO THE PESSIMISM AND NERVOUSNESS PROJECTED BY KLASA. IN PART, THIS MAY BE DUE TO THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENTS GREATER READINESS TO MEET NEEDS IN SILESIA AS OPPOSED TO KRAKOW, WHICH HAS ALWAYS BEEN ON THE SHORT END OF THE DISTRIBUTION STICK; IT MAY BE DUE ALSO TO THE RELATIVE STANDING OF THE TWO MEN WITHIN THE PARTY, WHICH HAD ONLY RECENTLY PUBLICLY CHIDED THE KRAKOW LEADERSHIP. IN ANY EVENT, IT APPEARS THAT SHORT TERM SHORTAGES WILL BE MORE SEVERE IN KRAKOW THAN IN SILESIA, AND THE CONSULATE WILL KEEP A CLOSE WATCH ON SUPPLIES IN KRAKOW IN THE NEXT COUPLE OF WEEKS.

DAVIES

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